

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 SCI-06 INT-08 FEA-02

AID-20 OMB-01 TRSE-00 STR-08 NIC-01 DODE-00 PM-07

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AMEMBASSY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY

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TAGS: ELAB, XT

SUBJ: ETUC CONGRESS--DEBATE ON THE ACTION PROGRAM

REF: (A) COPENHAGEN 1435 (B) COPENHAGEN 1427

SUMMARY: DRAFT ACTION PROGRAM PRESENTED TO ETUC CONGRESS IS SOMETHING-FOR-EVERYONE DOCUMENT BROKEN DOWN INTO SIX PRIORITY AREAS FOR ETUC ACTION: FULL AND BETTER EMPLOYMENT; PRICE STABILITY; ENERGY-RAW MATERIALS; WORK SAFETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT; EXTENSION OF ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY; AND, THE WORLD-DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. RADICAL SOCIALIST IN TONE, THE DOCUMENT IS MORE PRAGMATIC IN SUBSTANCE DUE TO NUMEROUS COMPROMISES ON DETAILED PROPOSALS. DEBATE AT THE CONGRESS FOCUSED ON THESE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS, REVEALING DEEP DISAGREEMENT OVER MOST OF THEM. NEVERTHELESS, THERE EXISTS SUFFICIENT CONSENSUS ON NEED FOR BASIS ACTION GOALS FOR ETUC THAT DRAFT PROGRAM WILL FORM BASE FOR CONGRESS RESOLUTION SCHEDULED TO BE ADOPTED MAY 25. END SUMMARY.

1. IDEA THAT ETUC CONGRESS ADOPT AN ACTION PROGRAM WAS BRAINCHILD OF KAARE SANDEGREN, FORMER ETUC DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY, CONCEIVED AS MEANS TO REVIVE MOMENTUM IN THE ORGANIZATION, WHICH WAS BEGINNING TO WALLOW UNDER GENSEC THEO RASSCHAERT'S UNCERTAIN DIRECTION. ALTHOUGH FIFTEEN PAGE DOCUMENT UNDER DEBATE WAS BASED ON SANDEGREN'S ORIGINAL "SOCIAL POLICY LIST," IT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY DEBASED BY NUMEROUS REVISIONS INTO AN UNEVEN AND CONTRADICTORY POT POURRI OF SOCIALIST POLICY PROPOSALS.

2. ATTITUDES TO THE DRAFT PROGRAM, CONSEQUENTLY, VARY FROM THE TOLERANT INDIFFERENCE OF SOME OF THE ITALIANS AND THE NEW CHRISTIAN (WCL) AFFILIATES TO THE COMMITTED IDEALISM OF THE NORDIC DELEGATES WHO DRAW ENCOURAGEMENT FROM FACT THAT EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONISTS ARE, AT LEAST AND AT LAST, TALKING TO ONE ANOTHER ABOUT A COMMON ACTION PROGRAM.

ALTHOUGH MOST DELEGATES REMAIN DULY SCEPTICAL ABOUT IDEA'S ULTIMATE FEASIBILITY, NO ONE WISHES TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR SHOOTING IT DOWN. ONLY IMF CHAIRMAN, (AND DGB DELEGATE) ODERERER--REFLECTING COMPETING INTERESTS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS (ITS)--DARED EXPRESS ACTIVE AND TOTAL OPPOSITION TO THE PROGRAM IN PRINCIPLE. IN FACT, DEBATE HAS BEEN SURPRISINGLY SERIOUS, AND, ALTHOUGH LIBERALLY LACED WITH PLATITUDES, HAS FOCUSED ON FIVE OR SIX RATHER SPECIFIC AND FUNDAMENTAL ITEMS.

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3. EUROPEAN PETROLEUM BANK: SECTION ON ENERGY-RAW MATERIALS CONTAINED PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PETROLEUM BANK WHICH WOULD PROVIDE PUBLIC CONTROL OF OIL SECTOR THROUGH MONOPOLY ON PURCHASE OF ALL CRUDE AND OF OIL PRODUCTS REFINED OUTSIDE OF EUROPE. THIS SUGGESTION FROM LAST NOVEMBER'S ENERGY CONFERENCE WAS QUESTIONED BY MOST DELEGATES, STARTING WITH LEAD-OFF SPEAKER, KOK (NVV- NETHERLANDS). BODSTROM (TCO- SWEDEN), SPEAKING FOR NORDIC TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (NTUC), SAID EUROPE NOT YET READY FOR THIS

IDEA. LEN MURRY (TUC) DEMANDED TO KNOW WHO WOULD CONTROL THE EPB AND WHO WOULD THE BANK CONTROL. BRITISH TUC THOROUGHLY BELIEVED IN ACCOUNTABILITY OF INTERNATIONAL OIL COMPANIES, HE SAID, BUT IT DID NOT WANT GROUP REPRESENTING OUTSIDE PRIVATE BUSINESS CIRCLES GAINING CONTROL OF BRITISH ENTERPRISES. HINTERSCHIED (CGT- LUXEMBOURG) SUPPORTED THE EPB, AS DID GEORGES DEBUNNE (FGTB-BELGIUM), ON GROUNDS THAT ETUC HAD TO HAVE SOMETHING TO PUT FORWARD ON THE OIL CRISIS PROBLEM.

4. PRICE STABILITY: DRAFT PRORAM'S PRINCIPAL PROPOSAL FOR COUNTERING INFLATION WAS PRICE COMMISSIONS--CONSISTING OF EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS REPRESENTATIVES--ORGANIZED AT NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVELS. PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF PRICE RISES WOULD BE MANDATORY AND COMMISSIONS WOULD HAVE RIGHT OF ACTIVE INQUIRY. DGB DELEGATES, H. O. VETTER AND LODERER, STRONGLY OPPOSED THE COMMISSIONS, PROMISING TO INTRODUCE COUNTER RESOLUTIONS IF THEY SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN FINAL RESOLUTION. VETTER CALLED FOR INCOME STABILITY AS PREFERABLE TO PRICE STABILITY, AND QUESTIONED THE TACTICAL ADVANTAGE IN MAKING TRADE UNIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRICE POLICY OF ENTERPRISES. IN PARTIAL CONTRADICTION, HEISS (ALSO DGB) ATTACKED IN EQUALLY STRONG TERMS WAGE SYSTEMS TIED TO COST-OF-LIVING ESCALATOR INDEX, ARGUING SUCH SYSTEM CONSTITUTED A RESTRICTIVE TRADE POLICY ON PART OF UNIONS. TUC DELEGATES APPEARED SIMILARLY EQUIVOCAL ON WAGE AND PRICE POLICIES, WITH MURRY LEANING TOWARD INTERNATIONAL ACTION WHERE NECESSARY AND JACK JONES PULLING IN DIRECTION OF VERY LOCAL DETERMINATION OF THOSE ISSUES. MURRAY EFFECTIVELY EXPOSED NATIONAL INCOMES POLICIES AS A WHIPSAW TACTIC, PLAYING OFF WORKERS IN ONE NATION AGAINST THOSE IN ANOTHER IN THE INTEREST OF WAGE RESTRAINT. HE REGRETTED, THEREFORE, THAT DRAFT PROGRAM CONTAINED ONLY TWO SENTENCES ON COLLECTIVE MULTINATIONAL WAGE BARGAINING. JONES CONSIDERED PRICE COMMISSIONS WOULD DIVERT ATTENTION FROM NATIONAL GOVT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CURB INFLATION, AND THOUGHT IT ILLOGICAL TO CREATE NEW MULTINATIONAL BARGAINING UNITS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHEN HIS UNION HAD JUST DECENTRALIZED ITS WAGE BARGAINING SYSTEM.

5. WORKER PARTICIPATION- ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY. DRAFT PROGRAM SECTION SECTION ON THIS SUBJECT RAN GAMUT FROM COMPLEX NORTHERN EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CO-OWNERSHIP CONCEPTS TO THE BASIS CALL FOR THE RIGHT TO STRIKE (AS AN ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY CONCEPT). THOUGH THIS ISSUE RAISED LESS HEAT THAN OTHERS, IT DID PIT THE GERMANS AND THE NORDICS AGAINST THE REST OF EUROPE. JONES (TUC) MADE VERY CLEAR THAT HIS CONCEPT OF ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY WAS "NO LESS THAN FIFTY PER CENT WORKER REPRESENTATION ON MANAGEMENT BOARDS, VOTED DIRECTLY BY AND FROM AMONG THE WORKERS AT THE FACTORY FLOOR". WE DO NOT NEED NEW BOSSES, HE SAID. DEBUNNE (FGTB-BELGIUM) ADMITTED THAT HIS ORGANIZATION FEARED CO-MANAGEMENT, AS A THREAT TO THE WORKERS INDEPENDENCE OF ACTION.

6. INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. SOLIDARITY WITH THE THIRD WORLD WAS ONE ISSUE THAT EVOKED UNANIMOUS ENDORSEMENT, WITH THE NEW CHRISTIAN AFFILIATES AND OTTO KERSTEN, ICFTU GENSEC, STRIVING TO OUTDO ONE ANOTHER IN THEIR DEVOTION TO THIS CAUSE. DETENTE AND EAST-WEST TRADE UNION RELATIONS WERE RAISED BY THE NORDIC GROUP IN BODSTROM (TCO-SWEDEN) INTERVENTION. MURRAY (TUC) SPOKE IN FAVOR OF DIALOGUE WITH EASTERN EUROPEAN ORGANIZATIONS BUT SAID THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF "ORGANIZATIONAL TIES". BOTH HE AND NORDICS MADE REFERENCE TO JANUARY 19 MEETING OF EW TRADE UNION REPS IN GENEVA IN POSITIVE TERMS. TAPIOLA (SAK-FINLAND) STATED DETENTE POLICY OF GOVTHAD ITS TRADE UNION ASPECT AS WELL. HE CITED "GOOD EXPERIENCES" SAK HAD HAD WITH SOVIET AND EE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND ENDORSED BODSTROM'S CALL FOR MENTION IN ACTIONPROGRAM OF POSITIE ELEMENT IN ALL-EUROPEAN TRADE UNION RELATIONS.

7. MULTINATIONALS. MNCS WERE FAVORITE WHIPPING BOY OF ALL DELEGATES, ESPECIALLY MAIRE (CFDT- FRANCE), WHO LAMBASTED NATIONAL GOVT'S SUBMISSION TO MNCS, PRINCIPALLY AMERICAN". WITH EXCEPTION OF MURRAY'S CONCERN FOR INDEPENDENCE OF BRITISH ENTERPRISES MENTIONED ABOVE, NO SPEAKER ROSE TO DEFEND MNCS.

8. EC-EFTA AND ETUC-TRADE SECRETARIATS. IN CONTRAST TO FIRST REGULAR ETUC CONGRESS (RE B SOULD BE CORRCTED TO SHOW THAT PRESENT CONGRESS IS EXTRAORDINARY ONE) IN 1973 WHEN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EC BLOC AND THE EFTA GROUP PROVED ALMOST AN INSOLUBLE SOURCE OF TENSION, AND WHEN THE PREROGATIVESOF THE ITS VIS-A-VIS THE ETUC WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A MATTER OF CONTENTION, THESE TWO PROBLEMS WERE SURPRISINGLYMUTED DURING PRSENT CONGRESS. BRITISH TUC DELEGATES, ESPECIALLY JONES, MADE REQUIRED REFERENCE TO CURRENT TUC NON-PARTICIPATION POLICY IN EC BODIES AND TO RE-NEGOTIATION PROBLEM, BUT THIS WAS DONE IN PRO FORMA FASHION. VETTER (DGB), ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS MOST SOLID EC PROPONENT. WHENDELEGATES WERE ASKED FOR EXPLANATION OF FACT THAT PRICE AND WAGE POLICIES AND EVEN MULTINATIONAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING WAS BEING DISCUSSED INETUC FORUM WITHOUTPROTEST FROM ITS REPRESENTATIVES, THEY INVARIABLY REPLIED THAT THAT PROBLEM WAS TOO LARGE TO OPENUP AT THIS CONGRESS.

9. RESOLUTION COMMITTEE MET AFTERNOON MAY 24 TO HAMMER OUT ON BASIS OF DEBATE A RESOLUTION EMBODYING THE AGREED ELEMENTS FROM THE DRAFT PROGRAM. RESOLUTION WILLBE VOTED UPON MAY 25.
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